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File No: TRS-54-02

Comments on Michigan TRS Certification

47 CFR 64.604- Mandatory Minimum Standards

The outreach methods used in Michigan aren't effective ways to reach the people who would use the service. You would have to already know about the service to look it up in a phone book, and I don't know anyone who looks at inserts in bill envelopes-especially people who use the phone as little as persons with speech disabilities.

A more effective way to build use of the service is to use the existing disability community network, targeting information dissemination to professionals who regularly come into contact with persons who might want to use the service (like speech therapists, occupational therapists, employment rehab counselors) and organizations that contact a lot of persons with disabilities (like Centers for Independent Living, Area Agencies on Aging, assistive technology programs, hospital rehabilitation programs, drop in centers, and similar programs).

Washington State, Minnesota, and Texas have created outreach models which Michigan could usefully follow. In addition to funds for materials, there should be on-line information to help targeted contacts to support persons with disabilities in actually using the STS service. In fact, some thought should be given to maximizing the ability of search engines to find the Michigan STS material when any one of a variety of terms are used to describe the service.

It should also be easy (top page link) for information on STS to be found at the Michigan.gov site.